

Sisk, Richard

From: Schmittziel, Paula
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2013 12:54 PM
To: Hestmark, Martin; Wharton, Steve; Murray, Bill; Sisk, Richard; Works, John
Subject: FW: Summary of Outreach - VB/I-70
Attachments: Outreach Efforts to date 051413.docx

FYI

Paula Schmittziel
Remedial Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1595 Wynkoop St.
Denver, CO 80202
Office: 303-312-6861
Cell: 720-951-0795

From: Chergo, Jennifer
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2013 12:40 PM
To: lisa.farrell@denvergov.org; Natterman, Jeannine; Miguel, Nola J - City Council Operations; Montoya, Chy - City Council
Cc: Schmittziel, Paula
Subject: Summary of Outreach - VB/I-70

Hi all. Here is a summary of our outreach efforts at VB/I-70 for your reference. I think this gives a good overview going back many years now. I believe that Councilwoman Montero had asked at one of our meetings for a summary of our outreach efforts to date. I also just thought this might be of interest to all of us.

Have a great day,

-jc

Jennifer Chergo

Office of Communication and Public Involvement
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202
1 (800) 227-8917 / (303) 312-6601

Outreach Summary

VB/I-70 Superfund Site OU1 Residential Soils Cleanup

1998-2006:

Outreach Objectives:

1. Focus widespread outreach efforts using multiple communication tools to all stakeholders – elected officials, community groups, property owners, media, etc..
2. Contact and gain access from every property owner to sample and/or cleanup their property.
3. Integrate Environmental Justice considerations into activities: All materials in Spanish and English - All public meetings with translation services – Set up Spanish Hotline – Attempt to make personal contacts with property owners using non-government employees, etc...

Outreach Methods:

Due to the high degree of public interest, the large population impacted, and the cultural differences among the communities, EPA provided for extensive community involvement throughout the VB/I-70 OU1 investigation and cleanup activities. Following are some of the more significant outreach activities, but the below summary is not inclusive of all outreach efforts.

Community Involvement Plan: In 1998/1999, EPA conducted more than 40 community interviews to get input into the development of a site Community Involvement Plan. The Community Involvement Plan attempts to capture community issues and concerns and lays a foundation for an appropriate, overall outreach approach. A draft Community Involvement Plan was distributed to the public for review and comment in June 2000 and finalized in February 2001. The Community Involvement Plan was updated in 2004/2005 after EPA signed the Record of Decision, using information gathered from 30 new community interviews.

Information Repositories: EPA established three separate information repositories, in three of the affected neighborhoods, in order to make reviewing site documents as convenient as possible for residents.

Technical Assistance Grant: The Cole, Clayton, Elyria, and Swansea Environmental Coalition (CEASE) organized specifically to focus on the VB/I-70 site activities. EPA awarded CEASE a TAG grant in 2000 and again in 2003. EPA met with CEASE members at least monthly CEASE from the very early site investigations through the remedy decisions and cleanup completion in 2006.

VB/I-70 Working Group: In August 1998, EPA formed a Working Group of stakeholders to provide an open forum for discussing all aspects of EPA's remedial investigation, remedial design, and remedial action. The stakeholders attending the Working Group meetings included representatives from all parties that had an interest in the site, including industry, agency, representatives of elected officials, and residents of the affected communities, particularly members of the TAG group CEASE. The Working Group members were committed and their collective input was essential to the project. The Group met regularly, usually once a month, through 2006.

Community Health Program: The Community Health Program was developed in consultation with the Working group. The program provided for biomonitoring of children and community outreach for the duration of the cleanup activities. The Community Health Workers also assisted EPA by encouraging property owners to participate in the program and provide EPA access to sample and/or cleanup. The Community Health Program Workers were residents from the affected communities who were trained and paid for their work.

Fact Sheets and Site Activity Updates: EPA distributed numerous fact sheets, flyers, and postcards throughout the duration of the project. All were distributed in Spanish and English. These were distributed at meetings, open houses, placed on the EPA Website, and often sent out in mailings with letters and access agreements directly to property owners. A general fact sheet was continually updated and available as a handout on the site Website. Most of these mailings specifically requested that property owners participate in the sampling and cleanup effort and provided access agreements or at a minimum, contact information. Some of the main fact sheets, brochures, flyers, and letters are listed here:

- Facts about Lead and Arsenic in Residential Soil (July 1998, updated Oct. 1998, and June 1999)
- Sampling & Cleanup Information (July 16, 1998)
- Superfund National Priorities List (Oct. 1998)
- Some Facts about Soil Sampling in the Neighborhood (April 1999)
- Why is EPA in Cole & Clayton? (June 1999)
- Risk Assessment for the VB/I-70 Site (Sept. 2000)
- Contact Sheet: For More Information about Activities Related to Soil Sampling and Cleanup in Five Denver Neighborhoods
- VB/I-70 Soil Sampling Results (Oct. 2000)
- Neighborhood Update on Arsenic and Lead in Soil (May 2001)
- VB/I-70 Proposed Cleanup Plan (May 2002)
- EPA mailed out numerous requests for access (a letter and an access agreement) directly to property owners. The initial mailings were to everyone – nearly 5,000 properties (2003-2006).
- Community Update: Arsenic and Lead Cleanup in your Neighborhood (March 2003)
- VB/I-70 Revised Proposed Cleanup Plan (May 2003)
- EPA Announces the Final Cleanup Decision for the VB/I-70 Superfund Site (Sept. 2003)
- Frequently Asked Questions about Lead and Arsenic in your Neighborhood (July 2004)
- EPA starting Soil Removals this Spring (March 2005)

- EPA sent a certified letter to all landlords whose property still needed to be sampled and/or cleaned up, but repeated requests from EPA have been refused or ignored. The letter was strongly worded and made clear that EPA could force access and payment for the work. (March 2005)
- EPA mailed a Last Chance Letter to all property owners who had not yet provided EPA access to sample. The letter stated that any future soil sampling or cleanup would be at the expense of the property owner. (January 2006)
- Residential Soils Project Completion (Fall 2006)

Workshops, Small Group Meetings, Availability Sessions, Meetings with

Individuals/Property Owners: EPA participated in and presented at a number of neighborhood organization meetings including the Cole and Clayton Neighborhood Association meetings, Cole Organizing Alliance, and many more. EPA also regularly provided community leaders with information to share with residents, including representatives from churches and neighborhood associations, and city councilors. From 2003 – 2006 and before, at every public meeting, open house, workshop, or neighborhood event that EPA attended, EPA encouraged property owners to provide access for sampling and/or cleanup of their yards. Some of these meetings are listed here:

- July 16, 1998 at Swansea Recreation Center. Public meeting on Phase I of soil sampling results.
- Oct. 8, 1998 at Swansea Recreation Center. Public meeting on Phase II soil sampling results.
- March 10, 1999, at Swansea Recreation Center. Public meeting on NPL proposal and public comment period.
- April 26 and 27 1999 EPA participated in ATSDR health public availability sessions
- June 22 1999, at Harrington Elementary. Public meeting on Phase III soil sampling and EPA activity in Cole and Clayton.
- Sept. 22 1999 at Swansea Recreation Center and Sept. 28 at Harrington Elementary. Open Houses on Risk Assessment.
- Feb 15 2000 at Annunciation School. Meeting for removal properties identified in Phase III sampling.
- Feb. 21 2000 at Harrington Elementary and Sept. 27 at Swansea Recreation Center. Public meetings on Phase IIIb soil sampling results and risk assessment.
- Sept. 26 2000 at Harrington Elementary and Sept. 27 at Swansea Recreation Center. Public meetings on Phase IIIb soil sampling results and risk assessment.
- October 2001 Community Forum to update community.
- Feb. 2002 Community Forum to update community.
- June 2002 Proposed Plan Public Comment Period Meetings
- June 2003 Revised Proposed Plan Public Comment Period Meetings
- August 2003 Construction Start Event to commemorate the beginning of Remedial Action with the community leaders and agency officials
- August 2003 Open House to show the community the soil removal and re-landscaping procedures.

- November 2003 Community Celebration event to announce the Record of Decision had been finalized and remedial action was beginning
- Spring 2004 various meetings in the community to develop the Community Health Program
- 2004-2006 Community Health Program Steering Committee Meetings
- 2005- 2006 Community Health Program subcommittee meetings
- Working Group meetings 1999-2006
- Construction Completion Ceremony, Oct. 25, 2006

Community Networking/ Relationship Building:

- EPA included community leaders, organizations, and churches in its mailings. EPA also occasionally met with them so that they could be as informed about the project as they wished and, as such, might encourage property owners to participate.

Door-to-Door Outreach

- From 2004 through 2006, Community Health Workers encouraged property owners to provide access for sampling and/or cleanup. The workers carried access agreements with them as they went door-to-door.
- From July through Sept. 2005, EPA paid community leaders to assist by going door-door and personally contacting property owners and requesting that they provide EPA access.
- In April/May 2006, EPA representatives went door-to-door to remaining properties in an attempt to gain access to sample and/or cleanup.

2012-2013:

Outreach Objectives:

1. Alert elected officials, agency representatives, key community groups and individuals about the renewed activity at the VB/I-70 site.
2. Focus outreach efforts at remaining properties to avoid confusion or undue concern at properties already addressed (*targeted outreach such as door-to-door efforts rather than broad outreach such as public meetings*).
3. Contact and gain access from property owners at properties where EPA could not previously gain access to sample or cleanup.
4. Integrate Environmental Justice considerations into activities: All materials in Spanish and English - All public meetings with translation services – Set up Spanish Hotline – Attempt to make personal contacts with property owners using non-government employees, etc...

Outreach Methods:

1. Brief Elected Officials, Agency Representatives, Community Groups and Individuals:

- **Meeting with DEH director and staff and Mayor Hancock's staff on Monday, June 18, 2012.**
- **Briefing for Denver City Councilman Albus Brooks on June 22, 2012 and January 3, 2013.**
- **Briefing with Denver City Councilwoman Judy Montero and staff on June 25 and December 3, 2012.**
- **Meeting with DEH staff, Councilwoman Montero, Councilman Brooks' staff, Rep. Diana DeGette's staff and others on April 5, 2013.**
- **Federal and state legislators:** Extended email invites in June 2012 about the action and offered to meet with congressional staffers (Bennett, Udall, DeGette) and state legislators in June 2012. EPA Congressional Liaison Sandy Fells followed up with congressional staffers a few weeks after.
- **Extended invitations about the action via email and phone to community leaders in summer and fall in the four main neighborhoods: Cole, Clayton, Swansea/Elyria.** EPA was not able to identify active community leaders who were interested in assisting, though EPA was not able to offer funding at that time.

2. Contact Target Property Owners:

- **Mailings:** In June 2012, EPA sent out a mailing with a letter, updated site fact sheet, access agreement and informational sheets on lead and arsenic to all property owners who have not granted EPA access to sample their properties. In August 2012, EPA mailed a second, much simpler, mailing with a letter and an access agreement to all property owners who still had not responded to previous attempts to contact them for sampling. In early November 2012, EPA sent a 1st letter to 25 property owners requesting access to clean up their properties that had been previously sampled but had not been cleaned up. All materials mailed were in Spanish and English. The mailings have proved to be the most successful means of gaining access to properties from the property owners – much more so than the informational session or the numerous door-to-door efforts.
- **Informational Session:** On June 28 2012, EPA hosted an informational session to discuss sampling and removal actions at properties with any property owners who might have questions. The informational session was held in a central, local location at the Bruce Randolph School and advertised to property owners in the letter sent to them. The

informational session was not advertised broadly in order to focus on just those target property owners. This was not a successful method - not one property owner attended the session.

- **Door-to Door Effort:** For three weeks in July, EPA representatives went door-to-door in teams, always with at least one Spanish speaker per team and attempted to contact property owners in person to gain access to sample their property. Where nobody was home during the door-to-door effort, EPA representatives left simple flyers in Spanish and English at the property with contact information. Two of the representatives in this effort were residents of the Clayton neighborhood.

EPA then enlisted the assistance of a former resident of the area and former Community Health Program worker. This individual went door-to-door to all of the target properties, often returning more than once. In addition, Denver City Councilman Brooks assisted by assigning his staff to visit the target properties on behalf of EPA. Unfortunately, this effort resulted in few additional access agreements.

- **Phone Calls:** EPA set up a hotline and utilized the EPA Spanish line and provided those numbers on all communications. Also, EPA did receive the phone numbers of a handful of target property owners from information gathered during the door-to-door efforts and is attempting to make contact with them via phone.
- **Other Means:**
 - Partner with city services and city inspector's offices? These city services may have an already established communication with some of these property owners. However, this is a time and labor-intensive strategy. Councilwoman Montero and Brooks' staff is assisting with this effort.
 - Additional door-to-door efforts from Councilman Brooks' office and Councilwoman Montero's office (through Groundwork Denver)?
 - Make contact through local and trusted individuals - EPA has shared the list of target properties with Councilwoman Montero's office, Councilman Brooks' office and a coalition of community groups – LiveWell, Groundwork Denver, Piton Foundation.